CHRISTES MIRACLES, 7

Deliuered in a Sermon.

By

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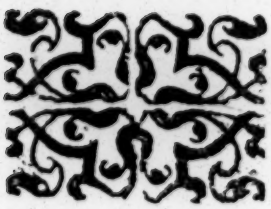
The ſecond edition.

Stephen.  Everarde

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CHRISTES Miracles.

Iohn 9. 16.

Then said some of the Pharisees This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabboth: others sayd; How can a man that is a sinner doe such miracles? And there was a dissentiō among them.

IN this verse is set downe a double opiniō which the Pharisees held concerning Christ, and especially concerning the works which he had wrought among them. Some of them haue peremptorily and flatly condemned him, saying, that he was a man that was not of God: and they render a reason, or rather a shadow of a reason; namely because he keepeth not the Sabboth, but their opinion was rash, and their iudgement false and erroneous, proceeding from the malice and hatred of the person of Christ. Also that which they haue vsed for a reason, wee haue shewed that it is likewise false: for CHRIST was so farre from breaking the Sab-

baoth, or any part of the law, that he did in full perfection fullfill the whole lawe of God.

Now followeth the opinion of the second sort of Pharisees, which said; How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? as if the holy Ghost should say, If our Sauiour Christ were such a prophaner and breaker of the Sabaoth, as you surmise him to be, then it were impossible for him, to do such strange and wonderfull miracles, as wee see he hath wrought: of this wee haue spoken before, and shall speake more hereafter, when we haue spoken generally of Miracles, of the workes of them, & therefore of the power of God, in working them, & also the power of Angels, of Satan, & of men therein. Whereas it is said; How can a man that is a sinner do such Miracles? these men do insinuate, that sinners can do some miracles in the sight of men, but to do such a miracle, as to cure a man being blinde from his birth, was impossible for them. It is impossible that any sinner should do this or any such miracles which Christ did, wee are therefore to shew, first, what a miracle is, that euery

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one vnderſtanding the nature thereof, may make ſuch proper and peculiar vſe of the ſame, as he ought.

A miracle is nothing elſe but a rare worke, apparently wrought by the ſole omnipotent power of God, cleane contrary to the order and inſtinct of nature, far aboue nature or naturall cauſes. I vſe ſo many words, that I may ſpeake to the capacity of all the people, whereas otherwiſe I might vſe fewer, we are therefore firſt to know, that it is a worke, for indéed it muſt be in it ſelfe a true worke, déed, or fact, otherwiſe it cannot in it ſelfe, and of it ſelfe, make men to muſe and maruell at it: at leaſt it cannot make wiſe men to maruell at it. If therefore it be a miracle, it muſt be a ſenſible worke, not a worke in ſhew, illuſion or deceit, but a worke in nature, in déed, and in truth: if it be but an apparance of a worke, it is no miracle. If it be onely in illuſion of the ſenſes, it is no miracle. It is then true that the illuſions of ſathan are no miracles, for he doth nothing but delude the ſenſes of mẽ, neither is it the celerity or agility of mens hands which are miracles, as of Iuglers, which

deceiue the people by an actiuitie in continuing the thing which they do. For they do not any true worke, but by their dexteritie deceiue mens senses. These therefore are no miracles, for euery miracle must bee a true worke, and fact indeed. I therefore first call a miracle, a worke, to seperate it from those that seeme to bee miracles, and yet are not, as be the works of Satan, and his members, and also those that are done by agility of man, which are workes in shew, but not in deed. This kinde of miracle which is a true worke, hath beene inwrought by diuers of Gods children, as Moses when hee was sent to deliuer the people of Israell out of Egipt, did worke many miracles, to testifie that he was sent of the Lord. He made Frogs, not in appearance, but indeed: he turned the water of the riuer into bloud, not in appearance, but in deed. So also Elias wrought miracles, not in shew but in deed. So Christ wrought miracles not in shew, but in deed. For Lazarus being dead indeed, he raised him vp againe in deed: when the wine wanted at the mariage, he turned water in deed into wine in deed, as pure

wine

wine as any issued out of the Vine, and so are all the miracles which hee did, workes in deed, & not onely in appearance. When therefore wee see any wonderfull thing come to passe, we must examine it, whether it be a worke in deed, or only in apperance. If it be not a worke indeed, as be the illusions of Satan, and of men, which deceiue the senses, and do not bring any worke to passe, then is it not a true miracle. For euery true miracle which the Lord hath wrought himselfe, or any of the Prophets, or our Sauiour Christ, haue beene true works. Secondly, I shall call it a rare worke of God, for of the works of God, there be some which are vsual, cõmon, & ordinary: as the preseruation of mãkinde, is an ordinary and vsuall worke of God, and it is truly said of the holy Ghost: that we liue, moue, & haue our being in the Lord: yet because this is vsuall, ordinary, & common, yea dayly and hourely, (for the Lord doth ordinarily euery day and houre, preserue men, otherwise they could not liue) I say because it is ordinary, dayly, & hourely, we cannot properly cal it a miracle, for it doth make mẽ to maruel, to muse, to bee

amased and astonied at it, seeing it is so vsuall and ordinary among them. For it is the nature of miracles, to make men, muse and maruell at them: and therefore when as in the Euangelists, any miracle which our Sauiour Christ wrought, is set down, there also immediatly followeth, that the people were astonied: therefore that which is vsuall, and common, cannot properly be called a miracle. A miracle therfore must be a rare worke of God, sildome brought to passe, & for this cause we cannot say, that repentance, or regeneration is a miracle, for although repentance bee wrought in few, yet is it not properly a miracle, because it is ordinarily, & vsually at one time or another wrought in the hearts of all Gods children. There be also many strange and wonderfull workes of nature, yet because they are not rare but vsuall, and ordinary, they be no miracles. An Adamant stone (wee know not by what force) will draw Iron to it selfe: Iron is heauy of it selfe, and of it self cannot possibly moue from place to place, yet an Adamant if it bee aboue it will draw it to it selfe, which is very strange & admira-

admirable, yet because it is vsuall and common, it cannot be called a miracle. So we may see the nature, and power of some water, to turne that which in nature is gold, into stone: that is knowne to bee true by experience, yet no man can shew any reason, why that water should rather doe it, then any other. Although this bee strange & wonderfull, yet because it is vsuall and ordinary, yet in those waters, it is no miracle: for euery miracle is a rare worke that commeth to passe, not ordinarily, but very seldome.

This worke is called rare, either in regard of the thing wrought, or in regard of the manner of working it. First in respect of the thing wrought: as when the Lord sent downe Manna from heauen, to feed such a great number of people as the Israelites were, this was very rare in regarde of the thing wrought. So when the Lord made the Sunne to stay in the element: so likewise (as we may read) when the Lord made the shadow of the Diall to go back.

Secondly, a miracle is rare in regarde of the manner of working it, as when the water was turned into bloud,

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it was not a rare thing to see bloud, but the manner of working it, as namely with a Rod, was most rare and was neuer seene before. So we do see that Christs manner of healing the blind man was very rare; therefore a miracle: if it be a miracle indeed, first it must bee a true worke. Secondly a rare worke, either in regard of the thing it selfe, or in regard of the manner of doing it.

Apparantly wrought, &c.

Thirdly, a miracle must haue this annexed vnto it: for it must not be obscure, but apparent, I meane not to the reason and iudgment of men, but to mans sence, that is, to some of his sences, or to all of them, without controuersie or doubting. This wee shall see in all true miracles wrought by God, to bee of this nature, namely cleare and euident to mans sences: for either men did feele them, as the darknes in Egipt, or else they might touch them, taste them, or smell them. When the Lord brought his people of Israel from Egipt, al the miracles which he by his power had wrought among them were most apparent vnto mans sence. As namely when

when they went through the red sea, there he made the waters to deuide themselues, and to stand like mighty mountaines on each side of them, in such sort, that they did most manifestly see, and behold the same. So likewise they saw, when Moses stroke the stony Rock, so that therout gushed water. So they saw most euidently the walls of Iericho fal down: and therefore if there be any miracle which is not apparent of it selfe, it is no miracle. Likewise what workes so euer be done by Satan or any of his Angels, if it be not euident & to be discerned by mans sense, hence we know that it is no miracle. Let vs by this property of a true miracle, examine the miracle of the Altar of the Church of Rome, for in the sacrament of the Altar, after the Priest hath said a few words as these, (*Hoc est corpus meum*) they teach ỹ there a strange worke is brought to passe, for the substance of the bread which was on the Altar, is gone and is changed into the body of Christ: if it were so, then indeed it were a miracle: but if it be a miracle, then men may discerne it by done sense or other: For let them shew me an instance where the Lord wrought

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any miracle which he did not subiect to the senses of man, but in this there is no miracle, which may bee discerned by the senses: for the bread in the iudgment of all the senses sæmeth the same that it was before to the sight, it sæmeth to be the very same in substance, of the same quality & colour that it was of before, it hath the same taste it had before, to the handling it appeareth the same that it was before, and hath the same smelling that it had before, there is not any sense that iudgeth now otherwise of it, thē it did before, & therfore it can be no true miracle. Indéed if before I séeing it to be bread, tasting, smelling, and touching it, doe iudge it to be bread, should now, séeing, smelling, tasting, and fæling it, perceiue it to bee the body of Christ, it wers a true miracle: but sæing to all the senses, it appeareth one and the same that it was before, it cannot be a miracle: but they say the outward forme and externall accident of the bread yet remaineth, but the substance of it is turned into the body of Christ, which though we cannot perceiue by our senses, yet we are to beléeue by faith. But how did Christ himselfe

ſelfe deale with Thomas, when he doubted of his reſurrection: he ſaid; Thruſt thy finger into my ſide, and feele whether I haue not fleſh and bones, for a ſpirit hath not as thou feeleſt mee to haue; hee taketh away his doubt by the ſence of fæling: and if this true naturall body of Chriſt were there in the bread, then might wee fæle it as Thomas did, for Chriſt ſtill retaineth that his true and naturall body, although he be now glorified. In-ſo-much therefore that in the bread there is no miracle apparent to the ſenſes, there is no miracle at all. But this is the difference (in Gods Church) that before it was common bread, ordained and ſanctified by the Lord, for the nouriſhment of our bodies, but now it is the holy bread, appointed, and ſet apart, and ſanctified by the Lord, not ſo much for the nouriſhment of our bodies, but eſpecially for the confirmation of our faith, and the foode of our ſoules. The ſame alſo is to be ſaid of the Wine.

Fourthly I adde: Wrought by the ſole omnipotent power of GOD. Wherein I note the workers of miracles. The LORD himſelfe worketh miracles, but

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peculiarly & properly by his power, & not by his wisdome, though both be infinite, & that a miracle is wrought by the power of God, I proue by these reasons. First a miracle is a worke of great power farre passing the power of all creatures, therefore it must needes bee wrought by the power of the Creator.

Secondly, it is apparent by diuers places of the word of God, as Ioel. 2. 21. 30. there the holy Ghost ascribeth the working of miracles to the Lord himselfe. I will shew wonders in heauen & earth, saith the Lord, Feare not O land, for I will do great things. Thirdly, the holy Ghost vseth this as an argument to proue, that Iehouah is the Lord, and is onely to be serued. Leuit. 26. Deut. 28. Albeit the Magitians of Egipt could worke many admirable wonders by their owne Art, and by the instruction of the Diuel, yet they confessed that the workes of Moses were not done by Moses power, nor by any act or skill that was in Moses, nor yet by natural causes, but by ỹ finger of God, which is nothing else but his power. By this argumẽt doth Christ proue, that his miracles

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were not done by the power of Belzebub: If I by the finger of God cast out diuills, by whom do your children cast them out.

Lastly, this may also appeare by the consideration of the meanes which the Lord vseth in working of miracles. As the shadow of Peter to cure diseases. Can any mans shadow cure another? No, but the Lord would haue that this meanes should shew that the things were wrought by his power. So the Handkercher of Paul did cure diseases, not that there were any such vertues in it, but that it came from the Lord: So also did the hem of Christs garments is there any power in the hem of a mans garment to cure diseases? surely no, but the Lord vseth that meanes to teach vs thereby that his power onely doth worke it. Here then wee must acknowledge, that miracles are wrought only by the Lord, and serue greatly to the aduancing of his glory.

Lastly wee must consider, that a miracle is contrary to the instinct of Nature.] Nature had neuer any such inclination, as to bring to passe any miracle, as when the water stoode on

two parts, nature had a desire to make the waters runne, when as then the waters stood, it was contrary to nature.

The vse.

The vse that we must make hereof, is to giue to God that which is his owne, that we should acknowledge him to be the sole author and worker of miracles, that either haue beene or shal be in the world. If thou giue them to Satan, then dost thou constitute him, instead of the Lord himselfe. Art thou the Lords: then know, that neither Sathan, nor any creature, is able to worke any miracle against thee. If thou be his, rather then his name should be dishonoured by thee, he will worke miraculously, for thy good and preseruation.

Further, this serueth to ratifie our faith in the power of God. The diuill is his seruant, whether he will or not, he can do nothing but that which the Lord willeth.

And hereby wee hold that our bodies shall bee raised againe at the last day. For God is able to worke all miracles: although there be neither bone, skinne, nor flesh

flesh left, yet hee is able to ioyne flesh to flesh, sinew to sinew, & raise vs vp againe with the same bodies, we had before.

The second part of this *Sermon.*

Now remaineth some-thing to be spoken more plainely and particularly of miracles. For as in all other things, so also in miracles, the Lord vseth diuerse and sundry waies of working. For either himselfe alone, & of himselfe alone, or else he vseth some creature in ỹ working of the same. As in the creatiō of the world, he vsed not any thing out of himselfe, but in himselfe, by himselfe and of himselfe alone, he created all things of nothing. So likewise in the working of some miracles, it pleaseth him not to admit the vse of any creature whatsoeuer. As when hee stayed the sunne in the firmament, he did it of himselfe without the helpe of any other. So also hee turned backe the shadow of the Dyall of Azah by himselfe alone without the vse of any other. But neuertheless in working some miracles, he vseth meanes, but

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especially man for the means therof. As in al the miracles wrought in Egipt, ỳ Lord did work thē indeed, but by ỳ hand of Moses & Aaron. He deuided ỳ red sea so, ỳ Israel passed through on dry foot, but it was done by Moses. So also he wrought many miracles in ỳ wildernes before ỳ Israelites, but by the hands of Moses & Aaron. So some miracles were done by Iudges, some by Elizæus, and others of the Prophets. So also God wrought miracles afterward, not only by his Son, but also by the hands of the Apostles. So that it is a true point of religion, to hold that the Lord in working of miracles, doth oftentimes vse the meanes of man therein. In this doctrine wee are to take heed of these two dangerous points. First, that wee derogat nothing from the Maiestie of God, although he vse meanes in the working of many miracles. Secondly that we do not magnifie the Creature, which the Lord vseth above that which is conuenient, Into which very many haue fallen heretofore. For the auoyding therefore of them, it is necessary to hold these two points of Religion: first to beleeue and know that

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the omnipotent power of GOD cannot be communicated to any creature. For the Lord saith, as of his wisdome, iustice and mercy, so also of his power. I will not giue my glory to another. Wee are therefore to hold, that the power of God cannot beseeme any creature whatsoeuer, no though it bee an Angell of Heauen. Secondly, that wee must know, remember, and constantly beleeue, that albeit the power of GOD could bee communicated to any creature, either in heauen or in earth, yet that there is no creature capeable thereof, no creature is able to beare it. This is euident in the example of Peter, before whome when CHRIST had wrought a miracle, and he had seene some small sight of his glory, he said, Depart from mee Lord for I am a sinfull man. If Peter could not abide the glimmering of his glory, and if it brought his sinnes to memory, in so much that hee thought himselfe vnworthy of his presence: how much more vnable had hee beene to beare the weight thereof?

But (may some say) if this be so why

then doth the Lord vse meanes in working of miracles: why doth hee vse men Prophets, Apostles, yea and these also which haue no iustifying faith, and also other creatures? I answere, the Lord vseth them, not because he stands in neede of them (for hee can worke all things of himselfe) neither vseth he them, that men should ascribe lesse to him, and more to the creatures which he vseth, but for to teach vs these three things.

First to teach vs, how his Maiestie doth approue the meanes whereby things are brought to passe: for if the Lord vseth meanes when as they be of lesse vse, much more will he approue when the meanes are vsed which haue some power to bring things to passe. This then is the first cause why the Lord vseth meanes, to shew that he would haue vs kept, maintained and liue in this world, but so, as by vsing such meanes, as his Maiesty shall appoint. Therefore no man ought to neglect and contemne the meanes, least hee oppose himselfe against the Lord.

Secondly, the Lord vseth creatures in working miracles, to support and vphold

vphold mans weakneſſe, who is not able to looke on his Maieſtie, when hee worketh himſelfe. This is plaine in the example of the Iſraelites. Exod. 19. When they came to Mount Sinai, to heare the Lord, there was ſuch thunder and lightning, and the ſound of a trumpet exceeding lowd, and the Mount all of a ſmoake, becauſe the Lord came downe by fire, they were ſo bereft of their ſences, and were ſo afraide, that afterward they deſired the Lord not to ſpeake to them himſelfe any more, but that they might haue Moiſes to ſpeake vnto them, and they would heare him.

Thirdly the Lord vſeth meanes for the tryall of our faith, of our religion, and conſcience, whether we will aſcribe the worke that is wrought to the worker thereof, or to the meanes, or partly to the worker, or partly to the meanes, or as ſome doe, all to the meanes, and none to the worker. The Lord tryeth whether wee will be conſtant, to aſcribe the power that is in miracles vnto his Maieſty, for in the miracles of Chriſt, wee ſee how diuerſly they were expounded, albeit

they were effected by the finger of God, yet the Pharisees would not ascribe them to the worker, but said, that hee wrought miracles by Belzebub the Prince of Diuels. This is the corruption of man and want of faith: they are ready to ascribe though not all, yet at the least some part of the miracle to creatures, which are but the meanes, and not wholy to the Lord, who is the onely worker of miracles; for these causes ỹ Lord vseth meanes in working miracles, to teach vs these things thereby, for all miracles are wrought not for him, but for our cause.

The meanes which the Lord vseth are of diuers sorts but especially three. First, some meanes which the Lord vseth in working of miracles, are such as may seeme to men to haue some power in them, for the working of the miracle. As when Moses came to the red Sea, hee lift vp his Rod, and stretched out his hand ouer the waters. So when hee came to the Rocke to get water for the people, he strooke ỹ Rocke with his staffe which seemed to haue some power in it to make the water gush out of the Rocke, afterward it did

The second sort of meanes which the LORD vseth, are such as haue not so much as an appearance of any force or power, or vse, in the working of the miracle. Such was the hem of CHRISTS garment, the hem of a garment hath not so much as an appearance, that it should heale any that are diseased. such was the handkercher of PAVLE to cure diseases, what are handkerchers or swadling clowts (as wee may as well say, for the curing of diseases) such was the shadow of PETER, wherevnto some comming were healed of their diseases. These were wrought when the Apostles were ignorant thereof, and when they were occupied about other matters. But yet it pleaseth the Lord to vse such means, although they haue not any appearance of any power in the working of a miracle.

Thirdly, the Lord vseth such meanes as are not auaileable for the worke, but seeme to hinder it, as in curing of the blind man, the clay which was made, and laid vpon his eyes, this Christ (who was God and man) vsed, though it seemed to containe in it a natural hinderance to the

miracle. These three sorts of meanes the LORD vseth, to teach vs three notable points.

First he vseth the first meanes to trie the trueth of our faith, to see whether we be so firme in faith, and whether we will so wholy relie vpon him, as that hee will giue all glory to him for the working of the miracle, though the meanes vsed doe seeme to haue some power of bringing it to passe, we must therefore learne to giue all glory to the Lord whatsoeuer.

Secondly, the second sort of meanes that the Lord vseth, is to teach vs, that it is he alone that worketh miracles, and not the creature which is vsed, his sole omnipotent power doth worke it: Let the meanes doe or bee what it will, whether it bee any creature what-so-euer, or no creature, as was the shadowe of Peter, which was nothing, but the absence of light. Let vs acknowledge the LORD to bee the onely cause and worker of the miracle.

Thirdly, the third sort of meanes, teacheth vs to giue nothing to the creature it selfe which is vsed, which is contrary

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to the opinion of many ſuperſtitious people, and contrary to all Coniurers, Sorcerers, or caſters of Figures: Sathan maketh them to thinke that the miracle is brought to paſſe by him, or the meanes which hee appointeth, and not by the power of GOD. But we muſt acknowledge that all Creatures what-ſo-euer, that albeit the power of Angels be great, yet if all theſe were ioyned together, yet they were not able to worke the leaſt miracle that could bee. This doctrine hath ſingular vſe. Firſt it teacheth vs what a miracle is. Secondly, what a miracle is not: as all maner of appearances are no miracles, whether they be illuſions of Sathan, or procéede from the deceipt, ſubtiltie, and agilitie of man, none of them are miracles. So the preſeruation of mankinde, albeit it be a true worke wrought by GOD onely, yet becauſe it is a true vſuall and ordinary worke, it is no miracle, for euery miracle is a rare worke of GOD.

Thirdly, it teacheth vs that no worke is a miracle which cannot bee felt, ſmelled, or perceiued by ſome of the ſenſes:

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when men therefore hold vs in hand that there is a miracle, yet if wee cannot see any thing, feele, smell, or taste any thing, contrary to the ordinary manner, there is no miracle wrought. Therefore let the malignant Church of Rome, teach, write, and decree in their counsells, that there is a miracle wrought in the sacrifice of their Altar: yet because I can neither see, touch, smell, nor taste any thing but the same that was before, it cannot be any Miracle.

Fourthly, euery miracle is wrought by the sole omnipotent power of GOD. If any worke bee done by the power of Sathan, or of any man: or any thing bee done wonderfully by the power of Nature, it is no miracle. If Sathan hath power to doe any strange thing, it is a naturall worke, and therefore no miracle. So also of the good Angells. So likewise if wee see strange things come to passe in the Heauens by Naturall causes, wee are not to thinke they are any miracles.

Last of all, if any thing fall out according

ding to the rare ſtrength and power of ſome Waters, or other creatures, if it fall out by Nature, or if partly by Arts, and partlie by Nature, it is no miracle. Whatſoeuer therefore is not brought to paſſe by the ſole omnipotent power of God, and that is not contrary to Nature, it is no miracle.

It followeth now to ſée, how many ſorts and kindes of miracles there be. I meane not how many ſorts there bee in Nature (for ſo there is but onely one true miracle) but in name, and as they are called, for ſo there may be diuerſe, and this I gather out of the words of theſe Phariſes. How can man that is a ſinner do ſuch miracles? inſinuating thereby, that there bee ſome miracles which ſinners may doe, yet not ſuch as CHRIST had done: Out of this place then wee gather that in name there be two ſorts of miracles. One is a true and diuine miracle, which is that whereof wee haue ſpoken before, which is an vndeceaueable miracle, for it is not done to deceiue any, but to magnifie the worke thereof, and for the good of

them

them for whom it is wrought, and for the profit of those which behold it: it is called diuine because it is wrought by the soule omnipotent power of God. Besides this there is a false vaine and deceiueable miracle, false I say because it is not this, for whatsoeuer is not this, is a false Miracle, and vaine, because it cannot haue any good, Godly, profitable and holy vse to the conscience of man, and deceiueable, because it deludeth men that are to discerne and iudge of it. This is the miracle which the Pharises here speake of, the which is granted to bee donne by the wicked. Elsewhere in the scriptures we read, who are the workers of this miracle, as namely Sathan himselfe doth often-times worke it.

So also his Ministers do often-times worke the same, for the holy Ghost teacheth vs, Math. 24. 24. That in the latter daies there shall come false Christs and false Prophets, and shewe great signes, and wonders, so that if it were possible they should deceiue the very Elect. Wee must not imagine that the false Christs shall worke true miracles, but they shall

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worke such strange and wonderfull things, that they should carry away many after them: nay if the Lord had not decreed in his secret councell to saue them that they should neuer fall away, they would also deceiue them. Whereby wee may be admonished, that seeing wee are in the last age of the world, that fearefull times are at hand, wherein false Christs shall arise and deceiue many. And is not Sathan now strong in the hearts of the reprobates: that they will teach false doctrines.

Now what if Heretickes and Scismatickes should haue power to confirme their doctrine by myracles and strange wonders? would not many beleeue in them? Let vs therefore (as Paul taught the Galathians) prepare our hearts that if an Angell from Heauen teach vs any other doctrine then that which wee haue receiued in the written word of GOD, let him be accursed. The Holy Ghost also foretelleth vs. 2. Thes. 2 9. That before the comming of CHRIST to iudgement, shall appeare Antichrist with all his power, with signes, and lying wonders.

The

The Holy Ghost doth before admonish vs hereof. That wee should not wauer at euery motion, nor fall away at euery tryall, but bee constant, & hold fast the Doctrine which we haue receiued from the Lord, by his Prophets, his Sonne, and his Apostles: then although we be tryed with Heretiks and Scismatikes, and seeme to our selues and to others to be lost, yet we shall be reserued to eternall saluation.

But some man may say: If Sathan can worke such miracles, and the Lord would haue false Christs to arise & worke wonders, how shall we iudge of a miracle that is done: whether it proceed from the Lord, or from Sathan and his Ministers, from a good cause and worker, or from an euill, and what we are to hold and thinke of the power of Sathan, how farre it reacheth, & what it is able to do. I answer, that this is a very necessary point to be knowne, and seeing we haue entred into the handling of miracles, wee will shew what miracles can bee wrought by Sathan, what is his power, where it beginneth, and where it endeth.

The

The third part of this Sermon.

Now therefore it remaineth to speake of the power of Sathan. Certaine it is, and we are to beléeue it by faith, that the power of Sathan is not equall to the power of GOD: it is not so strong, so large, and so wide: it is euery way infinitly lesse; there is no comparison betweene that which is infinite and that which is finite. If we compare it with good Angels, it will be lesse then some, and greater then other some, as afterward we shall more plainely see: but if wee compare it with the power of man, it is farre greater euery way: but yet we must knowe that it is a finite and naturall power, not supernaturall; for then none could be saued: it is mighty, but yet not Almightie: but that wee may better conceiue of it, let vs see wherein it lyeth. All the power that Sathan hath, consisteth in two points: First in his knowledge or vnderstanding.

Secondly, in his déed, action, or worke. For according as a mans knowledge is,

such

such is his deed: so is Sathans: as his knowledge is great, so also his worke great. For his knowledge it is to be considered whence it ariseth, and how hee commeth by it, so shall we better iudge of the greatnesse thereof. He hath his knowledge by these meanes that follow.

First from his spirituall Nature, for by Nature hee is a spirit, and therefore by Nature hath the measure of knowledge giuen by God to a spirit which is great. Wee know that there is a greater measure of knowledge in man, then is in a brute beast, by reason of that nature which the Lord hath giuen to man aboue beasts. So the diuill is made of a spiritual substance, and of that onely: so that hee hath not a body which might hinder him to see into the nature, quality, and operation of a spirit, and therefore being a spirit, he hath the knowledge of a spirit. In that therefore he is a spirit, he hath a greater familiaritie with our spirites, then otherwise he could haue. In regarde therfore of his nature his knowledge is great.

Secondarily, the measure of his knowledge may bee discerned by his creation.

God

God created him a good Angell, and gaue him the same measure of knowledge that he gaue to other Angels: Loke therefore what knowledge is in a good Angell by creation, the same knowledge is in Sathan by his creation. It may bee that he retaineth still that measure of knowledge which hee then receiued, albeit as it may bee thought, that as man by his fall, lost a great measure of that knowledge which hee had by his creation: so the Diuill lost a great measure of his knowledge by his Apostacie from the Lord. Further it is to bee knowne, that the diuil being now fallen, is not of the consultation of the Lord, as the good Angels are, for they stand alwayes before his face, ready to doe any thing that hee shall command them, for the good of the Elect, and therefore they are of the consultations of the Lord, but Sathan is not so, and therefore hee cannot haue so great knowledge as they haue, which is a great comfort to those that be the true children of God, that the good Angels, by the measure of their knowledge, are more able to saue and defend vs, then the Diuill is by the mea-

sure of his knowledge to harme vs.

Thirdly, the Diuill since his fall, hath increased his knowledge, both on the things on earth, and of the wayes of God, by long obseruations and continuall experience, who hath alwayes had experimentall knowledge of the nature of man: for he is wel acquainted with the age of men, hee knoweth what bee their affections, what is their nature, and what is their disposition, he knoweth what things be offensiue to mē, he knoweth also what pleaseth them best in their young age, what in their middle age, & what in their old age. And as in these things, so also hath hee experience in supernatural things. For he remembreth by whom he hath bin resisted, & who will not yéeld to him. This then must greatly amplifie his knowledge, séeing he hath alwayes had such long experience of all things that come to passe. As put the case there were one man aliue which were perfect in sence, in body, in minde, in reason, and memory, and in all the faculties both of the body and the minde, that had liued from the beginning of the world vnto this day, and had obserued all

things

things that had fallen out heretofore: this man would tell such wonderfull things, both past and to come, by naturall causes, and continuall obseruation, that I feare mee least many would worship him as a God: therefore the diuill must nœds haue great knowledge, seeing that he hath had all these. But he knoweth more then any man could haue done: for he doth not onely know those among whom he liueth, and the things that falleth out amongst them, but he goeth about into euery familie and country, obserueth what is done, and is well acquainted with their conuersation.

Fourthly, besides this he hath also another meanes to increase his knowledge. When the Lord commandeth him to appeare before him to render accounts of all the workes that hee hath done, Iob. 1 16. When the children of GOD, that is, the good Angels came before the LORD, Sathan stode amongst them, and the Lord sayd vnto him, Whence commest thou? and hee answered, From compassing the Earth too and fro: and the LORD sayde. Hast thou not considered my seruant *Iob*, how there is none like him in the

earth, an vpright and iust man? Sathan answered: It is not for nothing that *Iob* feareth thee, hast thou not made a hedge about him and his house, and about euery thing which hee hath on euery side? but touch all that hee hath, and then see whether hee will not blaspheme thee to thy face. Sathan knew well enough, that man will make shew of religion in prosperitie, but in aduersitie, by impatience would fall away: For hereupon the Lord gaue him liberty to afflict Iob, in visiting his body with sickneſſe, in taking away his children, and his goods: but whence hath he this knowledge? from the reuelation of the Lord: he knew that Iob should be visited with great sickneſſe, and lose his children, and his goods, when he heard it from the Lord, and so he knoweth many other things which are to come to passe, and after he once knoweth them, he goeth to Witches or such like, and tells them thereof, who likewise tell others of the same before it comes to passe, & so deceiue men thereby, making them to thinke that they know it of themselues: but neither they, nor the Diuel know it of themselues,

but

but by reuelation of the LORD vnto Sathan.

Fiftly, Sathan hath another excellent meanes to increase his knowledge which the Lord hath also granted vnto men: for they know what is to come by the Reuelation of the Prophets: for if there be any curse belonging to the people, the Prophets doe denounce the same, & make the people to know thereof, by the preaching of the word: whereas therefore the word is preached, there is Sathan present: he obserueth the doctrine, whether it be of power to bring men from the kingdome of darkenesse, to the Lord: from sinne vnto repentance. If it bee, then is he most busie, either to stop it from the Eare, or to pull it out of the heart, if they haue once receiued it, as Matth. 13. 19. By this meanes therefore hee increaseth his knowledge, that he may worke more couertly, and bee the lesse discerned: for hee can turne him-selfe into an Angell of light.

Sixtly, hee hath yet another meanes to increase his knowledge, and that is by the obseruation of naturall causes. If you speake of an Astronomer, hee can tell that

best: if yée speake of an Astrologer, hee is most cunning therein. Yea that which men gesse at, and as it were groape at in the darke, hee beholdeth and knoweth most certainlie, and can tell any thing that is to come to passe by the course of the Starres, and other naturall causes. If we speake of knowledge in the Artes, there is none comparable to him: hee is most skilfull in all the tongues, and there is no time that is hid from him. So that by these meanes hee hath wonderfully increased his knowledge. But some may say: Hath hee knowledge in any thing, in which the good Angels haue no knowledge? No for they are as diligent for the saluation of the godly, as hee is for their destruction. Psal. 91. 11. GOD giueth his Angels charge to kéepe Christ and all that are his, in all their wayes: nay they pitch their tents about him that feareth the Lord to kéepe him on euery side, that no harme befall him any way. And therefore as soone as Sathan had left off tempting Christ the good Angels came and ministred vnto him all things that were requisit for him in this life. But doth not Sathans

know-

knowledge serue to the working of a miracle: Not for it is a finite knowledge, and therefore cannot produce any miracle, for euery true miracle is wrought by an omnipotent power.

The second thing wherein Satans power doth consist in his action, or his deed, which as his knowledge is great, so it is likewise great. Let vs therefore see his actions. The deed of perswading is great, for he moued Cain contrary to his knowledge, and contrary to nature, not onely to reuile his brother, but to kill him, hee talked not with Caine, but by motions and perswasions in his heart did allure him thereunto. But it appeareth more great in his first action against man-kind, as when he came to our first parents in the forme of a Serpent (which argueth his great power, that he can transforme himselfe into such a creature, and abuse the tongue of a Serpent to that end) So we read of his actions also in Exodus, when Moses wrought miracles before Pharaoh by the finger of God. Satan also be his Enchanters did worke ỳ same miracles, yet not true miracles, because they did them not by the finger of

God, but by the power of Sathan. So also 1. Samuel. 28. Sathan comes to a witch, and would also tell ỹ witch what succesſe Saule ſhould haue in his battell, that he toke in hand, hee came in the ſhape of Samuel ſo that Saule thought he had bin Samuel. So alſo would he talke familiarly with men: therefore the Lord gaue a law, that if any one conſulted with a familiar ſpirit, hee ſhould die, which law had bene in vaine, if none had conſulted familiarly with him. So hee was a lier in the mouth of all the falſe Prophets, although they themſelues did not at that time perceiue it. So he poſſeſſed mens bodies, as in the Goſpell, when our Sauiour had caſt him out of a man, hée ſtraight way went into a heard of Swine, and euen ſo hée is able to draw mens bodies after him. We may alſo ſee his power by a compariſon with the good Angels. 2. Kings. 19. An Angel of the Lord ſlew an hundreth and 85000. men of Zenacheribs Hoſt in one night. Now the ſame power is in Sathan by his creation, which hereby appeareth to be very great. So when hee carried Chriſts body vpon a pinacle of the Temple, & vp into a mountaine

taine to tempt him. And Acts 16.19. there were exorcistes that would cast forth Diuills in the name of Iesus, but the euill spirit in the man, ranne on them, and ouer-came them, so that they fled out of the house naked, & wounded. It is therefore certaine, that Sathan is of a wonderfull power, and that the children of God haue often-times tried, both in themselues, & also in others. Among many other I remember one that is worthy remembrance.

There was a man in Geneua who fæling some-thing to fall out contrary to his minde, and for diuers causes which is not nædful to repeate blasphemed God, & desired that if there were any Diuills they might come and take him away, who was presently in the ayre, & neuer heard of after, saue onely that his cap fell off his head, which sheweth that satan hath great power: this teacheth vs ỹ mẽ must not be careleſſe, but must looke to thẽselues. For satan is a roaring Lion seeking whõ he may sooneſt deuoure: watch therfore and pray, leſt ye fall into temptation. But if satans power be so great, how comes it to passe,

that

that many men do so well in this world: I answere this power is barred and limitted by the Lord, and that by two especiall limits. The first limite, is his Nature, for hee is not able to doe any thing then that which his naturall disposition will permit and suffer. The second limit is, the will of GOD: for hee can do nothing against the will of GOD. Except the Lord doe either permit him or command him, hee is not able to doe any thing at all. As it is also in other creatures, the waters should by nature ouer-flowe the whole earth, yet they doe not because it is the will of GOD. So also is it with Sathan, as appeareth, when the Lord gaue him power of all Iobs goods, beyond ẏ Lords will hee could not goe, for the LORD will not suffer him to doe any thing to his Children: but onely that which shall tend to their good. Art thou in misery, or in any dangerous distresse, wherein thou art most subiect to the cruelty of Sathan: bee of good comfort, Sathan is limited, hée cannot doe any thing to thée, but onely that which the Lord commandeth him. But may not Sathans knowledge

and

and power bee vsed? I answere it may. God vseth it in punishing, tryng, and correcting his children. Againe the Apostles vsed his power, for they haue deliuered men to Sathan as Paule did. 1. Tim. 1. 20. Himeneus and Alexander, & as hee would haue done the incestuous Corinths. But may not a man vse it in familiar sort, in talking, barganing, & consulting with Sathan? No. This is forbidden Deu. 18. Leuit. 20. & wee are commanded to resist the Diuill, and to flie from him, wee must not therefore consult with him. Ye may oftentimes tell the trueth, but wee must not accept it. Christ gaue vs example hereof, for hee sayd, that Christ was the Sonne of God, which was a trueth, yet CHRIST commanded him to bee silent, to teach vs, that the truth is not to be receiued from him, for hee is the Father of lies. Here then all men are forbidden to seeke vnto satan, to know any trueth whatsoeuer. And therfore hereby we condemne those that vse witchery, by the counsell of sathan: and in the former places, the very action of consulting with satan, though no harme come thereby, is flatly death to

the

the party: I would this law were established in all Christian Churches, then there would not be so many witches in ỹ kinde, as now there are. I confesse indeed, there bee some which bee counted witches, which indeed are not, as namely those which hurt Cattell, as Oxen, Horse, Swine, or such like, or else children, not frõ ỹ counsell of Satan, but by ỹ traditions of other women, by poisoning them, in doing nothing but using the naturall causes therof. Those I would haue punished, yet not in the name of witches, but in ỹ name of murtherers. Some men thinke that they may ouer-rule Sathan by coniuration, in using this preparation, which is set downe by some of late, that they must make a Circle, and in it make Triangles, Quadrangles, and Crosses, and speake certaine words, as saying the Pater noster, and many other such like things that they may call vp Satan in what shape they will, and he will appeare and do for them, that which they desire. But is Satan a friend of theirs: can any such things make him obedient to man? Doest thou thinke that thou canst ouer-rule him by this meanes:

No

No surely, but hee rather by this meanes deceiueth thee, and all that are of thine opinion. And thus he deceiueth them that vse Characters. So there bee Charmes vsed to get away thy Head-ache, and Toth-ache. But doth the Charme get it away? No, Sathan knoweth before that thy Head-ache shall goe away, and therefore causeth thee to vse that Charme, and thereby would moue thee to ascribe it to the Charme.

But when Sathan whispereth men in their eares, how shall they know whether it be hee, or a good Angell that speaketh to them? I answere: there be diuerse manifest tokens, whereby thou maiest discerne this.

First the Lord doth not now vse such meanes to reueale his will vnto men: thou art therefore alway to suspect it to bee of Sathan.

Secondly, if it be a good Angell, ỹ maiest know by this: for if it be a good Angell, it will tell thee, either at first or at last, what it is, and for what it commeth, and from whence, as in times past the good Angells shewed themselues to Araham and Lot.

Third-

Thirdly, if it be a good Angell, he will assure thée to kéepe the writte word of God, if he do not, then suspect him.

The vse.

The vse of all this doctrine is to lead vs vnto God, to acknowledge him to bee our onely Lord and Sauiour, and to embrace the Sonne of God, as our King. In all things therefore we must go vnto him.

But whereas it is said: How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? it may bee asked whether Gods enemies can worke any miracles? I answere: hee that worketh is not against Christ, but with him: and we sée that those which indeuoured Acts. 16. to worke a miracle could not. And there was a dissension among them. Herein wee see that the Lord doth so worke, that Christ and his do finde fauour among their enemies, and that by their dissension among themselues. Here we see that Schisme is neither a note of a false Church, nor yet of a true Church, heere it is in a false Church: schisme ariseth of the diuersity of knowledge and iudgement of men:

men: for all men haue not one knowledge and iudgement, and all see not the truth, and if they should, yet all haue not the like yeelding affection thereunto. We are therefore to prepare our selues to meete with schismes, for it is necessary that there should be Heresies, 1. Cor. 11. 10. and that in the Church of God, that those which are approued might bee knowne.

FINIS.

Robert wallker
John blaney c) god bless
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for [illegible]